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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

22 June 1956

SUBJECT: Conversation with Colonel Andrew J. Goodpaster, Dr. James Killian and Dr. Edwin Land, 21 June 1956

1. At Dr. Killian's request I accompanied him and Dr. Land to the White House at noon on 21 June to brief Colonel Goodpaster on AQUATONE and to discuss current operations with him. No one else was present. Before the briefing was started, Colonel Goodpaster explained that he had just returned from a meeting with the President at Walter Reed Hospital and that the President had discussed AQUATONE with him. Colonel Goodpaster had with him the original copy of the memorandum entitled "AQUATONE Operational Plans" dated 31 May (copy of which is attached) which had been handed to him by the DCI and General Twining at the beginning of the month. The President had read the paper and had made a longhand notation upon it. His discussion of AQUATONE with Colonel Goodpaster had been related to the paper.

2. Colonel Goodpaster stated that the President's views were as follows:

a. In general, he approved the course of action recommended in the paper.

b. Specifically, he was entirely willing that we should operate over the satellites without informing Chancellor Adenauer about these activities but he emphasized that no longer run missions should be undertaken until the Chancellor had been told of our plans.

c. He agreed that the approach to the Chancellor should take the form recommended in the paper--that is, he should not formally be asked for his approval but merely told about the projected longrange operations, which would give him a chance to raise objections if he so desired.

3. The President, Colonel Goodpaster said, had added a general instruction in rather strong terms as to the policy to be followed in AQUATONE. This was to the effect that every effort should be made to obtain just as quickly as possible coverage of the high priority targets which were

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the real objective and justification of AQUATONE so that operations would not have to be continued for too long a period of time. I pointed out to Colonel Goodpaster that restriction of operations to the satellites was directly inconsistent with the policy desired by the President. Goodpaster replied that in his view the President had no particular desire to restrict us to these limited operations except that he did not wish deeper penetration missions to be undertaken until after the project had been discussed with the Chancellor.

4. In concluding this phase of the conversation, I asked Colonel Goodpaster whether a correct interpretation of what he had said was that after the projected conversation with the Chancellor we are free to proceed with deep penetration overflights, provided, of course, that the Chancellor raised no objection and that our limited operations had gone well in the meanwhile. He indicated that this was his view.

5. The balance of the conversation was devoted to a rather full briefing of Colonel Goodpaster and discussion of various phases of the project primarily by Drs. Killian and Land. The main topics discussed were the following:

a. Progress of equipment, with special emphasis on the shift that has been made to the new (J-57 P-31) and more reliable engine and on the extremely high quality photography obtained in recent flights in the US with the A-1 and A-2 camera configurations.

b. Present enemy interception capability, the predictable development of a higher altitude interception capability, and a consequent urgency of making use of this reconnaissance system while a clear advantage over interception still obtains.

c. Colonel Goodpaster's desire for periodic operational reports when deep penetration missions are being conducted.

d. The whole question of the position to be taken by the U. S. in the contingency of the loss of an aircraft over enemy territory. On this point I explained that arrangements of a rather pedestrian sort were being worked out with the Department of State and other interested parties. Drs. Killian and Land suggested consideration of a much bolder action by the U. S. involving admission that overflights were being conducted to guard against surprise attack. It was left that we would think further about

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this matter and perhaps suggest several alternative courses of action which would be discussed with someone in the Department of State and among which a choice could be made on short notice.

RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.
Project Director

Attachment:

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RMB:djm

1-DCI

2-RMB Chrono

3-Dep. Proj. Cir

4-Proj. Chrono (Hold)

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